

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph on page 1, line 19, with the following:

“While consumers view the ability to skip commercials as an advantage, service providers generally do not. As used here, content providers refers to those entities that provide the actual programming, such as television shows, movies, concerts, music, etc. Service providers generally provide the connection, the distribution and delivery service, and account maintenance for the consumers, etc. Service providers may also be content providers, and content providers may also be service providers, but generally service providers are of interest here.”

Please replace the paragraph on page 7, line 23, with the following:

“In one embodiment, this provision of alternative content can interact with an application that tracks viewing usage and content selections, disclosed in US Patent Application No. 09/864,360, filed May 23, 2001, entitled “Content Discovery and Differential Advertising in Video Distribution Networks.” Generally, a background program, such as an applet, acts as a source of information about the content being experienced by the user at the NTU’s network location. The NTU can act as an awareness trigger by placing an indicator in a packet about the content it is currently viewing. Using embodiments of the current invention, the content controller could sense these packets and tell the NTUS viewing video on demand or recorded programs to load the alternative content application based upon the indicators. When an intermission occurs, the alternative content application then provides is then provided ~~the alternative content~~, based upon user preferences, a predetermined selection or even based upon the content currently being viewed as main content as designated by the indicators.”